

graphe Bay and one, in a decomposed condition, has been reported from Cape Leeuwin. It is possible that further examples of this strange deep-sea fish have been cast upon our shores unnoticed.

The Oarfish may reach a length of over 20 feet and weigh 5 cwt. It is known to occur in the Indian, Atlantic and Pacific Oceans and has now and again been mistaken for a sea serpent.

—L. GLAUERT, W.A. Museum, Perth.

**Flocking of Willie Wagtails** (*Rhipidura leucophrys*).—It is a very pretty sight on a very windy day to see a flock of Wagtails hopping and fluttering into the wind. These flocks, which are only seen during the non-breeding season, have interested me for some years. Any time between February and September on a *windy day* one may see these small flocks of up to 20 birds feeding into the wind. They appear to be made up of young birds or unattached birds and though they may feed across the territory of resident pairs they meet with little resistance as a rule. The resident pairs are inclined to stand aloof though half-hearted attacks are made at times. It is probable that most of the birds are the young from a number of resident pairs and have not become territory conscious, but there do appear to be a few small flocks of travelling birds in February-March, which tend to travel southwards. This year flocking was still seen during the stormy weather of the first week of October.

—ANGUS ROBINSON, Coolup.

**Food Washing by Common Sandpiper.**—On a sandy beach, with some rocks, to the east of Point John, near Roekingham, I was watching a Common Sandpiper (*Tringa hypoleucos*) when it obtained an item of food from a pile of seaweed and, before swallowing it, washed it at the water's edge.

Food washing has been recorded in a number of waders as a result of an enquiry commenced through *British Birds*, vol. 39, 1946. Several of these waders are on the Australian list, or are represented by nearly allied forms, so the following list of species concerned may be of interest:—Oyster-catcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*), Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*), Grey Plover (*Squatarola squatarola*), Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*), Curlew (*Numenius arquata*), Whimbrel (*N. phaeopus*), Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*), Bar-tailed Godwit (*L. lapponica*), Common Sandpiper (*Tringa hypoleucos*), Greenshank (*T. nebularia*), Redshank (*T. totanus*), Green Sandpiper (*T. ochropus*), Curlew-Sandpiper (*Calidris testacea*), Dunlin (*C. alpina*) and Common Snipe (*Gallinago gallinago*). A second record of food-washing by a Common Sandpiper was published recently in *British Birds*, vol. 43, p. 229.

I note that most records of food-washing have been made where birds were feeding on mud-flats.

—ERIC H. SEDGWICK, Leonora.